

# WHAT'S *New*

in the Metropolitan Police Department



*A weekly update for residents, visitors,  
and workers in the District of Columbia*

*Friday, March 19, 2004*

## FBI-MPDC TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES INDICTMENTS IN MAJOR PCP TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATION

Chief Ramsey joined federal officials this week in announcing the indictment of 26 individuals responsible for trafficking Phencyclidine, also known as PCP, in an area of Northeast DC centered at 18th and M Streets. Twenty individuals were arrested on federal and DC narcotics charges, and search warrants were executed in at least 25 locations in DC, Maryland, Virginia, New York, and Georgia. The operation grew out of a long-term investigation by the Safe Streets Task Force, a joint FBI-MPDC task force targeting gang and narcotics activity and associated violence in DC. According to the two related federal indictments, the 26 defendants operated as a narcotics distribution organization, largely directed by two New York area-men, who arranged for the shipment of PCP from other areas for distribution in DC. While the conspiracy was national in scope, the local trafficking operation was centered in the area of 18th and M Streets, NE. The local organization was led by John L. Franklin, 31, of the 1300 block of Belmont Street, NW, who obtained the PCP and was the major distributor of the drug to traffickers in the 18th and M Streets area. These defendants then distributed the PCP, as well as crack cocaine and Ecstasy, to customers from Virginia, Maryland and the District who came to that neighborhood to buy drugs. This week's arrests are the culmination of an investigation that has seized multi-gallon quantities of PCP, valued at nearly \$1 million, destined for the streets of DC, as well as assault weapons and cash.

- ① Read the complete news release at:  
<http://www.mpdcc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2614>
- ① According to the Drug Abuse Warning Network, PCP "mentions" at DC-area emergency rooms increased more than 300 percent between 2000 and 2002, when there were 1,302 cases. Details at:  
<http://dawninfo.samhsa.gov>
- ① Information on PCP, its addiction qualities and health hazards is available from the National Institute on Drug Abuse at:  
<http://www.drugabuse.gov/drugpages/pcp.html>

## STATIONARY PHOTO RADAR CAMERA DETECTS 10,000 AGGRESSIVE SPEEDERS DURING FIRST 15 DAYS OF WARNING PERIOD

More than 10,000 motorists were found to be speeding aggressively by DC's first stationary photo radar speeding reduction camera during its first 15 days of operation. Those vehicle owners are receiving warning notices only. But beginning March 28, aggressive speeders will be mailed actual Notices of Infraction for speeding violations caught by the camera, which is located in the 600 block of Florida Avenue, NE. Chief Ramsey announced the activation of the "fixed-site" speeding reduction camera – the first of its kind in North America – on February 26 at Gallaudet University, which borders the stretch of Florida Avenue where the camera is located. During the first 15 days, the photo radar unit detected 10,284 vehicles traveling above the speeding threshold established for the program, or an average of 685 a day. The highest speed recorded during this period was 88 mph; the speed limit at the camera location is 25 mph. The 30 days of warning notices are part of a Police Department effort to educate DC-area motorists about the dangers of speeding and the Department's crackdown on this dangerous behavior using photo radar. Beginning March 28, 2004, aggressive speeders caught by the fixed-site camera will receive Notices of Infraction in the mail. While photo-enforced violations do not carry points in the District, the fines for speeding range up to \$200 per violation.

- ① Read the news release at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2615>
- ① The MPDC has deployed mobile photo radar cameras since the summer of 2001. Aggressive speeding in these enforcement zones has declined nearly 80 percent since then. Details at:  
[http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults\\_text.shtml](http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/speedresults_text.shtml)
- ① For the latest results on DC's red-light traffic safety camera program, in operation since 1999, go to:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/info/traffic/redlight.shtml>

## MPDC AND ABRA TAKE ACTION AGAINST UNLICENSED, AFTER-HOURS CLUB

DC's Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration (ABRA) and the MPDC this week took action against an unlicensed, after-hours club inside a private residence at 507 T Street, NW. The investigation of the private residence, known as House of Secrets, was initiated after ABRA received information that the residential home was operating as an unlicensed, after-hours club. Additional information indicated the location was hosting parties for hire and included events in which underage drinking of alcoholic beverages, gambling, drug use and sexual conduct were occurring. On March 14, 507 T Street, NW was found to be operating as an unlicensed establishment. The owner of the residence, Ralph Woodson, was arrested by the MPDC for selling alcoholic beverages without an ABC license, making alcoholic beverages available to persons under the age of 21, and possessing marijuana with intent to distribute.

## MPDC CLARIFIES ITS VEHICULAR PURSUIT POLICY

In response to news media reports suggesting the MPDC has a "no-chase" policy, the Department this week clarified what its vehicular pursuit policy states. Departmental general orders do permit vehicular pursuits, but only for serious crimes against a person in which the suspect's potential to escape and commit further crimes outweighs the dangers to both the public and the officer that are inherent in the pursuit itself. The MPDC has a restricted vehicular pursuit policy that limits pursuits to situations in which an officer has reasonable grounds to believe that the vehicle he or she is about to pursue was involved in the commission of a crime that involved or threatened death or serious bodily injury (a standard that parallels the Department's use of force policy for firearms). Stolen auto is not a crime that falls within the restricted pursuit policy, and Chief Ramsey has said the solution to the auto theft problem is not the high-speed pursuit of inexperienced teen and pre-teen drivers through neighborhood streets. The Department's current policy dates to the early 1990's, when several vehicular pursuits under the previous unrestricted pursuit policy resulted in motor vehicle crashes in which other drivers and innocent bystanders were killed or seriously injured. The MPDC's vehicular pursuit policy is in keeping with standards established by the Commission on the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies and other professional law enforcement organizations.

## NEWS & NOTES

**Chief Ramsey on WOL's "Live at Five."** Chief Ramsey discusses public safety issues and takes phone calls from 5-6 pm, on Wednesday, March 24, during his regular monthly appearance on the "Live at Five" program on WOL Radio (1450 AM).

**Emergency Transportation Tips.** The District Department of Transportation has published a booklet detailing transportation tips during an emergency incident. Copies have been distributed to DC households through the Washington Post and the mail, and are available at police stations, libraries and other facilities. For bulk quantities, e-mail Natalie Jones at [natalie.jones@dc.gov](mailto:natalie.jones@dc.gov). Or view the brochure online at [www.ddot.dc.gov](http://www.ddot.dc.gov).

**Street Sweeping and Parking Restrictions Resume.** After a winter hiatus, regular sweeping of DC streets resumed on March 15. Parking restrictions associated with the regular street sweeping schedule are also in effect, with violators facing a \$30 fine. Details at [http://www.dpw.dc.gov/dpw/cwp/view,a,1201,q,603200,dpwnav\\_gid,1479.asp](http://www.dpw.dc.gov/dpw/cwp/view,a,1201,q,603200,dpwnav_gid,1479.asp).

- ① Read the news release at:  
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/news/news.asp?sid=2613>
- ① To learn more about the mission, organization and activities of ABRA, visit its website at:  
[www.abra.dc.gov](http://www.abra.dc.gov)

### DATA BOX

#### Homicides (as of 3/19/04)

- 2004: 40
- 2003: 50
- % Change: -20.0%
- Closure Rate: 52.5% (21 closures)

#### Adult Arrests (week end. 3/13/04)

- Total: 932
- Drugs: 157
- Weapons: 18
- Motor Vehicle Theft: 23
- Prostitution/Sex Offenses: 34

#### Firearm Recoveries (as of 3/16/04)

- March: 92
- 2004 Total: 477

#### Traffic Fatalities (as of 3/19/04)

- 2004: 10
- 2003: 7
- % Change: +42.8%